

# Appendix 14



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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AUSTIN A. ANDERSEN  
INTERIM INSPECTOR GENERAL

INSPECTIONS AND EVALUATIONS DIVISION  
*MANAGEMENT ALERT REPORT*

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
YOUTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
OAK HILL YOUTH CENTER**

**ABANDONDED BUILDINGS AT OAK HILL YOUTH  
CENTER**

**MAR 03 – I - 013**  
**JANUARY 28, 2004**

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**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**Office of the Inspector General**

Inspector General



January 28, 2004

Yvonne D. Gilchrist  
Director  
Department of Human Services  
2700 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE  
801 East Building  
Washington, DC 20032

Marceline D. Alexander  
Acting Administrator  
Youth Services Administration  
8300 Riverton Court  
Laurel, MD 20724

Dear Ms. Gilchrist and Ms. Alexander:

This is a Management Alert Report (MAR-03-I-013) to inform you of significant issues that have come to our attention as a result of our inspection of the Department of Human Services, Youth Services Administration (YSA). The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) provides these reports when we believe a serious matter requires the immediate attention of District of Columbia government officials.

**Observations**

Oak Hill Youth Center (OHYC), located on a large parcel of land in Laurel, MD, is the former location of Forrest Haven, a District-run facility for severely handicapped youths. The site contains numerous buildings once used for housing, training, and support that have been unused and abandoned since Forrest Haven was closed in 1991. The inspection team (team) found that many of these abandoned buildings have been vandalized and, in some buildings, fires have been set.

Although OHYC facilities maintenance employees stated that the buildings were secure, the team was able to gain access to many of them because the doors were either open or unlocked. The amount of vandalism and debris, such as discarded clothing and other personal items, observed by the team makes it clear that trespassers have easily and consistently accessed the buildings. (See attached photos.)

In addition, the team found that many of these buildings, although not in use, still have active electrical and water service. For example, the building that served as Forrest Haven's laundry still contains commercial-size laundering machines. During a daytime visit to the laundry, the team found that the fluorescent lights in the ceiling were on, possibly since Forrest Haven's closure in 1991.

Accordingly, we recommend that the YSA Administrator take the following actions immediately:

1. Ensure that each abandoned building at the OHYC is secured against vandalism and safety risks;
2. Ensure that electrical and water service to unused buildings is disconnected.

Please provide your comments on this MAR by February 13, 2004. Your response should include actions taken or planned, dates for completion of planned actions, and reasons for any disagreement with the concerns and recommendations presented. Please distribute this Management Alert Report to only those personnel who will be directly involved in preparing your response. Should you have questions or desire a conference prior to preparing your response, please contact Lawrence Perry, Director of Planning and Inspections, at 202-727-8490.

Sincerely,



Austin A. Andersen  
Interim Inspector General

AAA/lp

cc: Mr. Robert C. Bobb, City Administrator  
Lori E. Parker, Interim Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders  
James Parks, Deputy Director for Administration, DHS  
Councilmember Kathleen Patterson, Chairperson, Committee on the Judiciary